



ERIC WHITACRE'S VIRTUAL SCHOOL

CHAPTER 10: FINDING YOUR VOICE

Your 'sound' as a reflection of your true self

Student Guide – Curiosity Edition



Introduction

This video will help you gain insight into what it means to “find your voice.” You will explore ideas that will help you know more about your unique style.

In this video, Eric discusses the process of “finding your voice” as a composer, or how to “write who you are.” He demonstrates this through several of his works in which he effectively quotes himself when similar themes or images emerge. He suggests that composers look to their inner world, through meditation, as well as by listening to a great deal of music, finding voices that speak to them, that become their heroes. In these ways, young composers can discover their own emotional truth, and from that, their personal style will grow organically.

Works referenced in this video:

- *Go, Lovely Rose*: https://youtu.be/X7Uv9Ke0_vk
- *Cloudburst*: <https://youtu.be/BQOMypd3JmM>
- *Water Night*: <https://youtu.be/1DQQmtNuXUU>
- *A Boy and a Girl*: https://youtu.be/j_AMI0vRqF8
- *i carry your heart*: <https://youtu.be/lm6lFtyPN5E>
- ‘Home’ from *The Sacred Veil*: <https://youtu.be/IT9dZEWKGWY>

Words and ideas to help you stay curious

Style

Your Unique Sound World

“A sonic symbol to describe your inner world”

Discussion, Discovery and Insight

What are some things that you would describe as “uniquely you?”

What do you think “style” is and how would you describe your own personal “style?”

What kinds of music do you love to listen to, and what does this say about your personal musical style?

Your “sound” as a reflection of your true self

1. Except for identical twins, no two people are exactly alike; even identical twins have subtle differences in their personal preferences, likes and dislikes, and how they may dress, think, or express themselves. Your unique voice can be expressed in so many ways. Take some time to describe yourself in relation to the following ideas by completing the following sentences (use one or many words for each):

- When I speak, I want people to hear...
- I dress the way I do because I want people to see...
- When someone first meets me, the word(s) they would use to describe me would probably be...
- When someone gets to know me, the word(s) they would use to describe me would probably be...

2. How you answer these questions will give you a little insight into your unique style. Share your answers with someone who knows you well and see if they have any insights for you from an outside perspective. There are no right and wrong answers, only insights into your uniqueness.

3. The sentences you completed (above) were intended to give you insights into your unique preferences and your unique style. Write several new sentences that are similar, but different, to the sentences you completed above. Have the new statements express even more about you as a unique individual.

4. Describe your personal style in a paragraph. How do the things you like and dislike express who YOU are through your choices of clothes, music, food, tastes, or other factors? Discuss your thoughts.

5. What is your favorite kind (genre) of music? Who are your favorite musical artists? Describe how you think you came to like these artists better than other. Describe why the style of the music matches your own personal musical style and tastes. In other words, explain why you like the music you listen to more than other music that you don't choose to listen to.

6. Eric describes the concept of "A sonic symbol to describe your inner world." If you had to choose one short sound that would be your unique style marker, what would that sound be? Would it be a sound that naturally is found in your daily life, like a car horn or a computer beep, or would it be a musical sound of some kind? Spend a day or two listening to ALL the sounds you hear around you as you move through your day. Go online and find some musical sounds or other kinds of sounds. If you hear one that you like – that you think could be a kind of "sonic symbol" for you, remember it or record it. Share it with friends and describe why you feel it expresses your inner world in some way.

Reflection and Insights

Do you try to achieve an unusual style, or do you like to blend into the style fabric of the people around you? Explain your thoughts.

Eric says: "Be a sponge: Listen to everything." How much do you do this? Are you open to new ideas and music, or are you set in your preferences and likes/dislikes of music? Explain.

Your style is like a favorite color or a favorite food. Only you know what you like and prefer. Would you say you are developing your unique style, or do you think that you already have a style and are learning better how to express it? Explain.

Would you change this activity to better suit your learning style and interests? If so, describe how you would change it and why the adjustments would be better for you.
